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Robe Keeps it in the Family with Level 42

Products Involved

MegaPointe®

Lighting designer Yenz Nyholm of New Illumination illustrated in style how a lot of imagination and a moderately sized lighting rig with 23 x Robe MegaPointes as its backbone ... can go a very long way on the current Level 42 "From Eternity to Here" tour.

Combining all the hits and more from their back catalogue of foot-tappingly infectious pop rock tunes from the 1980s and 90s, embellished with swirling richness from a three-piece brass section, the band are happily tripping audiences back a few decades with a lively, upbeat set with some short pauses for ballads and a bit of soul.

Creatively, Yenz needed some seriously multi-purpose lighting fixtures to keep the looks and effects rolling, and with no video on the tour, lighting is the primary visual element. On the practical side, the whole rig had to fit into one truck, along with audio, backline, and catering; it had to be built each day by Yenz and one tech and look good in the venues with limited height or restricted flying!

"MegaPointes were a bit of a no-brainer," stated Yenz. "They are powerful, small, lightweight, brilliantly versatile ... and my go-to fixture."

Nine MegaPointes on the back truss are joined by 12 strategically deployed on the floor. Five of the floor fixtures are used to create a fantastic array of kinetic gobo and projected animation effects on the dark grey reflective satinique crinkle backdrop, which shimmers and energises with the added lumens, complete with five columns of bug-screen flown in front a little genius touch to add texture and three dimensionality!

The MegaPointes are also used for beam-technology looks, for classic back lighting and silhouetting effects and for specials and solos. They are essentially the heart of the rig.

Other lights include six upstage wash moving lights, some key lights on the front truss, six towers of vertical pixel tubes behind the band that adds some symmetry and form to the space plus shed loads of 2-lite and 4-lite blinders for retro blasts of slow-decay tungsten.

This might be a small rig on paper, but Yenz hits all the right buttons on his Avolites Tiger Touch console to make it look hugely bigger when everything was fired up and running! Judicious and intelligent use of the technology combined with a great feel for the music and vibe ensured the visual tricks and surprises kept coming with every song right through the set!

It is a tribute to true lighting craftsmanship to see maximum dynamics from such an expedient rig!

"It's a full on up-tempo, party atmosphere onstage," explained Yenz who has been the band's regular LD since 2008, so that was a start point for the lighting design. "My gig is to help get that vibe out into the audience - it's about everyone having fun enjoying fast and furious music ... there are lots of opportunities for lighting cues and detail."

Lead singer and bassist Mark King - famous for his slap style bass playing - is always into new ideas for the stage presentation, whilst leaving Yenz the space to weave his own magic.

Once Yenz had received the proposed setlist, he did some extra research trawling YouTube for original live recordings of the band from the late 20th century to see how some of the numbers might have been lit back in the day.

The tour was originally scheduled for 2020, but canned due to the pandemic, so he unexpectedly found himself with an extra 18 months to think about programming and fine details!

"I didn't want to get too clever for my own good," remarks the softly spoken Dane for whom the UK has been home for many years. "This is a party, so lots of brightness, vibrance, movement and bold colours ... the base level is quite straightforward!"

Having used Robe Pointes for the last two Level 42 tours in 2016 and 2018, he stepped up to Megascopes for this one, after thoroughly enjoying their many possibilities on Howard Jones' 2019 tour together with Robe LEDBeam 150s, another favourite lighting fixture.

He loves the MegaPointe's zoom and being able to go from a pin spot to a massive wash in a split-second, and the general robustness of the fixtures which certainly get a good workout during a Level 42 set!

Yenz has been incorporating Robe products in his work since the very early days of the brand almost 20 years ago and thinks that Robe today is taking a positive and creative approach to product design with LDs in mind and constantly moving forward.

He has also worked closely with Siyan, the High Wycombe-based rental company who are the lighting vendors for this tour, for many years, with their project manager Steve Finch handling the account.

His “amazing” tech is Jason Tomes, another long-standing relationship – the two work together on all Yenz’s tours.

While the shows have been packed with enthusiastic audiences all craving live music and performance after an 18-month industry shutdown due to Covid, the touring party are also clearly enjoying being back on the road playing live shows and working hard.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland









